Connect

supporting student participation

In these pages...
dangerous material about students ...

- Training
- Declaring
- Deciding
- Acting

Fifth National Student Participation Conference

NASPAC V: Dates Change!
7-9 April 1999
Hobart

In this issue:
- Children's Parliament: Barefoot College, India
- Reconciliation Convention, Darwin
- NSW State SRC & State Conference
- Training JSC Members: Part 2: Talking to Tell
- NASPAC V: More Program Details
- Millennium Young People's Congress
- Resources: SRC Kit: A Practical Guide for Students and Teachers

& Incorporating the PASTA Newsletter #9

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Connect, 12 Brooke Street, Northcote 3070 Victoria Australia

$4.00
As we come towards the end of yet another year, I realised with a jolt that this will be the 15th anniversary of publishing Connect. In particular when I wave copies at meetings of SRCs and study networks, it is with some remission that I see that no of them were born when the first issue appeared.

And, for those of you who don’t realise it, the been 19 years of publishing Connect without a finance subsidy or support subscriptions have managed to p costs - for the printing and postage - but that’s all.

Some of these musings were inspired by a phone call and a note that the Victorian-based journal Educati Alternatives will cease publication at the end of this ye after 70 issues over 7 years. It will leave a big hole in the area of education news and commentary. We salute Dav Cohen’s work, and recognise the pressure of, as he sa; ‘Tougher economic days in education and school coupled with rising costs and the imminence of a GST.

But Connect will keep battling on - at least for the moment. (If a GST is implemented, we may have to re consider in light of both the costs and the administrat work load!) I am heartened by your continued support and want to remind you how important that is, both reassuring me that the voluntary labour in producing Connect is worth it, and in actually providing the content and subscriptions.

Connect relies on you for its information: gone are the days (well, there were a few in 1979 and 1980) when wrote everything. Connect now shares what you write about your exciting, challenging and occasional daunting practices in classrooms, schools and networks that’s you: students, teachers, adminstrators, consultant and others.

You also continue to subscribe to Connect and, i indicated above, that is the only income and obvious essential to our survival. Connect needs to be on a firm foundation here - and one way to do that would be to double the subscriber numbers. If every current subscriber (you again) introduced Connect to one other person an encouraged them to subscribe, that would make continuation operation so much more secure!

So, we’re willing to supply you, free, with a copy of any issue of Connect for you to pass on to someone - we’re willing to send out a copy to someone - with you seasonal wishes! Just tell us who!

Best wishes for the season and, for those of you who have them, for the summer holidays! We’ll be back in February with more, hopefully, inspiring reading to kick off 1999 - our 20th year! But that depends on you.

Roger Holdsworth
At a recent UNESCO-ACEID Education/Youth Conference in Bangkok, one of the most interesting sessions was presented by Mr Bunker Roy from the Barefoot College in Tilonia, Rajasthan, India. The work of the College in areas of water supply, health, solar power and village development generally was fascinating enough, but the particular focus that took my attention was the education work of the College and, in particular, the developing formal role of students in running the night schools. The following information is drawn from published accounts of the Barefoot College (see credits at the end) - and background material on the overall project is included on the next page. I'd welcome queries from people who'd like to know more. Roger Holdsworth (Editor)

The Barefoot College, Tilonia, Rajasthan, India

Bal Sansad - Children's Parliament

The most perplexing and challenging, but important, of children's rights in the UN's Convention is the right of the child to participate. The Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC) in Tilonia (Rajasthan, India) has always valued and respected the opinions of children, and with the Bal Sansad or parliament, they have a chance to get actively involved in the running of their schools. This includes planning and decision-making, but the children bear their new and heavy responsibilities with ease and enthusiasm.

For Tilonia, working with thousands of children over an area of 500 sq km, the only reliable resources are the teachers, the children and their collective enthusiasm. Innovation is not only to impart reading and writing skills. It should not mean, for example, that children earn nine languages before the age of seven. For Tilonia, innovations serve to make children see equal and responsible society members regardless of caste, gender or economic situation. Opening up children's minds to what is possible is the main objective.

Working children contribute to their households and their family incomes, but their contributions and opinions are not acknowledged. The Children's Parliament is one way of recognising the fact that children's voices need to be heard. When people now ask, "What's new with Tilonia's schools?" staff often reply, "Children have begun to run them."

An example of election processes:

The formation of a New Cabinet took place on June 1, 1995. There were 17 Member of Parliament seats from 2 parties: 'Ujala' (light - as opposed to darkness) and 'Gawaal' (shepherd). 'Ujala' won 9 seats. 'Gawaal' won 7 and there was one independent seat, which, in true political style, was swallowed up by the 'Ujala' party.

Debate began over who would be the next Prime Minister. Two were in the running: Laxmi and Kana Ram. Laxmi had much in her favour: she was a girl and she was at the 3rd standard or level in school, which would give her enough time to establish herself as Prime Minister. Kana Ram had been the ex-Prime Minister's right hand person and the Dairy Minister in the old cabinet. A boy, however, he stood less chance especially as he was from a party with 7 girls out of 9 members. He was also in the 5th standard and would be leaving school soon. Finally Laxmi was sworn in and a leader of the opposition nominated.

Some of the rules governing elections:

- Only children registered as voters are allowed to stand for elections or vote;
- Candidates should know how to read and write;
- Cabinet ministers should compulsorily be standard or level 3 and above - the same is true for Ministers of State, but the rules can be bent if the candidates are girls;
- 33% of all seats are reserved for girls;
- Nomination forms should be accompanied by identification cards and sanction letters from parents and the Shiksha Samitis or village committees;
- Elections should be monitored by Shiksha Samitis in the respective villages.

December 1998
Duties of elected representatives:

- To get fresh enrolments for the night schools;
- To take attendance every day in the schools. This includes children and teachers as well;
- To report on their visits to other night schools;
- To write to the respective ministers and secretaries should any problem arise or come to their notice in a school;
- To attend the meetings of the village Shiksha Samitis and their activities;
- To be informed and report on the facilities (especially with regard to Health and Drinking Water) within their village;
- To plan out a budget and submit expenses for the running of the Government;
- To discuss and decide on all issues taken up at State Assemblies and in Parliament;
- To take disciplinary action against any minister not attending meetings regularly;
- To see that elections are conducted in all schools that may have missed out on them. This includes the schools opened after elections.

Meetings are quite strenuous affairs where everyone is questioned on each of their activities. Laxmi is proving to be a charismatic leader and, for many, her election proves that things are going in the right direction - she belongs to a 'scheduled caste' whereas the previous Prime Minister belonged to the Jat Community, a dominant caste.

The children do not only limit themselves to discussions on their schools. They talk about their villages, water problems and attend the Shiksha Samiti meetings. Laxmi, when asked what school needs the most improvements, says it is her own.

Each minister is supposed to visit every school five times a month and after these visits, discussions are held on: “Was the teacher any good?”, “How many children were there?”, “Was the lighting good?” “Were the equipment and records in order?” The older children talk about installing hand pumps, building school walls and replacing teachers.

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The Barefoot College

Some Background

Rajasthan is a semi-arid state in northwest India. One of the country’s largest and poorest states with a population of over 44 million (1991 census), 45% of all males and 80% of all females are illiterate. More than half the children of school age (6–14 years) do not attend school, and the majority of these are girls. The State of Rajasthan is divided into 58 blocks and 37,844 villages where most people survive on subsistence farming or manual labour. Tilonia is one of 110 villages in Silora Block in the Ajmer District.

The Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC) officially started in the village of Tilonia in 1972. Its founder, Bunker Roy, wanted to break away from the Indian social work tradition, which had an urban, middle class and academic orientation. He wished to set up a voluntary organisation which would attract young urban professionals to come and work with local villagers in an integrated development process. SWRC, Tilonia or the Barefoot College, as it came to be called later, began informally and slowly. The project spread through the natural interaction of the staff with the local communities as the needs of the area were slowly revealed.

In about 1979, it was realised that urban-trained professionals did not have the capacity to stay for long periods in rural areas. The movement towards sustainability took a further step forward: the rural poor became more involved in Tilonia as the urban-based professionals stepped aside. The project’s self-evaluation process and on-going experience meant that concepts of development, education, experts, professionalism and research have been redefined. The result is an organisation which has become a creative leader in education and development in the region. Radical steps were taken to achieve this reorganisation levelling out the salary scale and treating all staff equally, (other urban-educated staff resigned at this point) decentralising programs with even more power for surrounding villages, through the establishment of field centres and collaborating as equal partners with the rural poor. Today, approximately 80% of the staff are from rural Rajasthan.

“We believe that paper-qualified, urban-trained experts and professionals can easily be replaced by people from the village,” says Bunker Roy. “People in Tilonia do not need knowledge - they need confidence and assurance that the skills they already have are enough to improve their quality of life.”

Tilonia has five non-negotiable values which are the foundation of all its programs from education to social work:

- equality;
- collective decision making;
- self-reliance;
- decentralisation;
- austerity.
Education

Tilonia’s education programs are seen as means for creating self-esteem and appropriate skills. They contribute to the learner’s community and arouse awareness about the environment and the forces that dominate development. Literacy and numeracy are part of this process, but are not the central goals.

The aim is to nurture learning for those who have been let down by the formal system or who have no chance of joining it. The formal education system, Tilonia believes, is solely oriented to meet the needs of the middle-class as school hours (daytime, vacation schedules) do not suit rural children, and the curriculum has an urban bias which can only prepare students for government and professional employment (sectors that have gross unemployment). The language of instruction, in formal schooling, also generally forces children to learn in a tongue other than their own and schools are often not located within reasonable walking distance for young children.

Three experimental schools were founded in 1975 to test new methodologies of non-formal education such as the use of folklore, songs, puppetry and theatre in classes, training and learning groups. The conventional teacher-student relationship which sees the teacher as an expert imparting knowledge to students evolved to incorporate a different philosophy in which everyone teachers and learners. A curriculum grew accordingly with relevant subjects for rural children. This meant modifying existing non-formal pedagogical methods and solidifying the concept of Barefoot educators. Schools were rescheduled to meet the times of rural children and teachers were drawn from the surrounding communities and trained in the SWRC concepts.

Night Schools

As teachers became more involved in the actual planning and implementation stages of the programs, a requestioning of the role of education in the development process occurred, particularly the role of the night school in relation to the SWRC. It appeared that the night schools could serve as a structure around which development could take shape.

Forty day-care centres and four day schools are run through the Barefoot College. The emphasis, however, is on the 150 night schools which have now been established in 89 villages for more than 3000 children who work during the day. Initially the government was asked if the night schools could use their infrastructure, since formal school buildings were not used at night. Where this was not possible, the village inhabitants allowed the use of community centres in the village. Whenever even that facility was not available, the night schools were located in teachers’ houses.

Girls’ education is given special emphasis as over 60% of the night school students are girls. The Village Education Committees and the night school teachers talk with parents who are not sending their children to school and do their best to persuade them. The equality of girls and women in society is continually stressed. These values are certainly being communicated since the children themselves have elected a girl Prime Minister - Kaushalya Devi, a 14 year old student who looks after goats in the morning - for their Children’s Parliament.

Children’s Parliament

This Parliament is an exciting innovation of the Barefoot College night schools. Children participate in elections which parallel the political structure of the Indian government. They elect a prime minister, ministers and a legislative assembly. The Parliament teaches them about the political process and the value of recognising good candidates on their own merit, regardless of caste, class or gender. For the children in the Parliament, it is an important learning process to impress upon them the values of responsibility. It demonstrates that with power comes responsibility and both can be enriching.

The process also enables the children to become more actively involved in the functioning of their schools. If a teacher is not coming regularly to school, the minister of education is responsible for reporting it to the Barefoot College. And if the solar lights are not working in a school, the minister for energy reports in.

“These night-school children are our future teachers, midwives, computer programmers, water chemists and political leaders,” stresses Bunker Roy.

Selected and adapted from: Catherine O’Brien, The Barefoot College ... or knowledge demystified, UNESCO, 1996 (Innovations Series: Education for All - Making It Work)

plus quotes from ‘The Barefoot College in Tilonia: Discovering self-esteem’

See also: Aruna Roy: Tilonia’s Night Schools - An Alternative Approach, SWRC, 1982

Copies of the ‘Innovations Series’ are available from UNESCO. Contact:

Global Action Program on Education for All
UNESCO
7, Place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP FRANCE
Tel: (33-1) 45 68 10 00 Fax: (33-1) 45 6856 29

December 1998

5
UNESCO-Asia-Pacific Centre for Educational Innovation for Development

The Fourth UNESCO-ACEID International Conference ‘Secondary Education and Youth At The Crossroads’ was held in Bangkok between 10-13 November 1998. Preceding and operating during the Conference, a Youth Forum brought together about 50 young people from countries in the Asia-Pacific Region. This Youth Forum made representations to the whole Conference and was also represented on Panels and Roundtables.

In addition, the Youth Forum presented the following Declaration to the Conference:

**Youth Declaration**

We, the young people of the Asia-Pacific region, envisage a world in which:

1. We have more opportunity to voice our ideas and concerns, and be heard. We can make valuable contributions at all levels of society - from the family to the international community.

2. We have freedom of action and choice - with an awareness of our rights and responsibilities.

3. All youth have access to education, without discrimination on the grounds of gender, disability, race, social status and geographical location. In order to achieve this, we need:
   - provision of adequate education in remote areas;
   - reduction of fees and costs associated with school;
   - programs and projects to address the problem of under-age labourers, sex workers and street youth.

We believe a regional treaty is necessary to enforce these measures.

4. We have access to education on issues which affect us, including:
   - HIV/AIDS;
   - sex and reproductive health issues;
   - our rights;
   - abuse;
   - the environment;
   - economic and political;
   - parenting;
   - drugs and alcohol.

5. There is a revolution in curricula and teaching methodologies. Curricula must be relevant to the lives of the students, captivate their interest, and provide them with the knowledge and skills they require for life and employment.

Curricula need to include:
- vocational and life skills education;
- values and ethics education;
- up-to-date scientific and technical information which is relevant to the modern global community;
- communication skills, such as languages and the use of the internet;
- cultural and cross-cultural education, including first-hand experience (such as exchange programs).

6. The quality of schools has improved. To achieve this, we need to ensure that:
   - the number of students in each class is not too high, so that the teacher can give each individual student the attention he or she deserves;
   - decision-making is decentralised in some areas in order to make education appropriate and relevant to local conditions.

7. Youth centres are established or improved. These centres will provide affordable access to:
   - vocational activities;
   - cultural activities such as theatre, film and music;
   - internet access and computer skills training;
   - sport and other leisure activities;
   - clubs, discussion groups and forums.

To ensure that these centres are appropriate and effective, it is important that:
- young people are involved in planning and administration;
- centres are flexible, friendly, comfortable places where a wide range of young people have the opportunity to be involved in activities;
- centres are established in rural and urban areas, and access is not discriminatory;
- programs are appropriate and relevant to the local community and culture, and can make genuine contribution.

8. Specifically trained youth workers and counsellors are available to assist young people in understanding issues which affect them. Counsellors need to work in schools and youth centres, providing:
   - emotional support;
   - career guidance;
   - information about sex, drug and alcohol issues;
   - information about young people's rights and responsibilities.

9. Teacher training is a force for change.

Well-trained teachers will:
- know how to teach creatively;
- learn from students;
- be sensitive, open-minded facilitators and be aware of students' special needs.

It is also essential that:
- the status and salaries of teachers be improved;
- teachers in remote areas be provided with incentives;
- no-one is excluded from entry into the teaching professional on the grounds of disability, race, gender, etc;
- teachers have access to on-going training.

*This is the world we envision.*
DATE CHANGE!

Please note that the Conference date has been changed from the 14-16th of April to the:
7th - 9th of April, 1999

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION OFFER!

BARGAIN!

$35 bed and breakfast. Comfortable living, hotel-style rooms with TV and other features. Please notify the organisers on the Registration Form if you’re interested.

REGISTRATION FEE

Full registration is $50.
Early bird registration (before February 20th, 1999): 20% discount - fee: $40

PARTICIPANTS

Those attending NASPAC V will be students, teachers, administrators, consultants, parents and others interested and involved in the diversity of student participation in Australian schools.

LOCATION

St Michael’s Collegiate School
218 Macquarie Street, Hobart

GUEST SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

- Paula Wreidt: Tasmanian Minister for Education
- Matt Durose: State College Chaplain
- Ken Page: PASTA Treasurer
- Margaret Scott: Author
- Dr Jaqui Trifitt: Sports Psychologist
- Ralph Murray: PASTA President
- Robyn Moore: Voice of “Blinky Bill”

ORGANISERS

NASPAC V is organised by students, teachers and consultants from Tasmanian Government and non-Government schools, with support from Connect and PASTA. Registration forms from:

NASPAC V Organising Committee
(Kelly West, Secretary)
PO Box 47, Rosny, Tasmania 7018.

NASPAC V, the Fifth National Student Participation Conference will be a constructive, informative and exciting experience for you and for the development of student participation in your school. NASPAC V needs people like you to make it a success.

It will be the ultimate experience.
S.W.O.T. WORKSHOP

The S.W.O.T. workshop, one of many of the constructive and useful workshops on the program for NASPAC V, will be held on the first day of the conference. It is the perfect opportunity for you to analyse and assess Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats of student participation in your school. The session will run for approximately three quarters of an hour, and will help you to identify problem areas in your school system which will provide a starting point from which effective student participation can be maintained/developed/constructed for you and your school. This workshop is an important beginning to the development and improvement of student participation for you in your school situation.

FORUM

A forum will be conducted where you can challenge other conference participants through general discussion about attitudes towards student participation by students, teachers, etc. On the panel are: Paula Wreidt, Tasmanian Minister for Education and Politician; Matt Durose, State College Chaplain; Robbie Batten, Student - State SRC; Jaimee Scaife, Student - State SRC. Your voice will be listened to and the panel will respond to the issues you raise. Discover what these people have to say about issues that you raise. You and your opinions will be listened to and respected. Your say will make a difference.

DISCOVERY WORKSHOP I

Discovery Workshop I will be held during the first day of the conference in the afternoon. It is an opportunity for you to look specifically at the current situation of your school. This session aims to make you aware of where student participation is both successful and unsuccessful in your school. It is a time to analyse and discuss how you relate to and participate in the life of your school, and what the outcome was of such participation.

DISCOVERY WORKSHOP II

The Discovery Workshop II is where you will be able to explore, discuss and share your successes and failures with other participants, identifying common problems. This session aims to increase your awareness of your school’s current situational compared to that of other schools. You can compare the experiences you have had, both successful and unsuccessful, so that you can learn from each other’s experiences and achievements.

MOTIVATION WORKSHOP

The Motivation Workshop will be facilitated by Dr Jacqui Triffitt, one of Tasmania’s best sport psychologists. The session will be based on motivation and success. This session has great relevance to the conference, because you will be taught how to become motivated enough to make a difference, putting your ego aside to achieve a more successful outcome and work together with peers.

ISSUES WORKSHOP

The workshop discusses how effective student participation would impact on issues such as youth suicide, curriculum relevancy, leadership training stress management, spirituality, school governance etc. This session will be held on the second afternoon of the conference and will be an interesting and useful experience for all attending.

ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP

During this workshop, which will be held on the third and last day of the conference, you will draw together all of the information and ideas that you have developed over the three day conference, and you will formulate your own action plan. This plan, or mission, will consist of your goals, planning, action and perseverance which will lead to your success personally, within your school and for the future. Or completion of this workshop, you can share your plan with others for evaluation.

For more details and Registration Forms, contact:
Kelly West, Secretary, NASPAC V Committee
PO Box 47, Rosny Tas 7018
Email: <westles@southcom.com.au>
VOICE OF YOUTH HAS ITS SAY ON RECONCILIATION

Forum for the Future: the national youth reconciliation convention, 14-17 July 1998

Reconciliation. What is it? We all know that it is one of the hottest topics in Australia, but why? What drives reconciliation and why is it so important?

Earlier this month, 350 students from every state and territory came together to talk about this complex issue when our school hosted the first national youth reconciliation convention.

The convention, Forum for the Future, came about when 17 Kormilda College students attended a regional reconciliation meetings and the National Reconciliation in May last year and found that young people were conspicuous in their absence.

"Why not hold our own youth reconciliation convention at Kormilda College?" they asked. And so the idea was formed.

Students That Action Reconciliation Seriously (STARS) began to work on the Darwin convention, with the emphasis being on young people's views on reconciliation.

We staged the Darwin Youth Reconciliation Convention in July last year and its success inspired the STARS to aim for an even bigger event.

In May last year, with the help of teacher and friend, Paul Tolliday, and supported by the sponsorship of Rio Tinto Ltd and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, the 12 STARS-comprising Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students from years 9-12 at Kormilda College - formed a series of committees and began organising the convention.

The convention is an example of enterprise education in action. In place is a federal initiative that aims to create a school environment to equip students to become more self-reliant, see opportunities in a changing world and have the skills to take advantage of them.

Our dream was to have hundreds of students from around the country debate topics on reconciliation. From these discussion, recommendations would be made in a youth reconciliation charter, which would be presented to the federal parliament.

The forum was held at Kormilda College on 14-17 July. Inspiring speakers included Evelyn Scott, Gatiil Djerrkura, Ernie Dingo and retired NSW Children's judge, Barbara Holborrow. Students listened to many guest speakers throughout the week who were knowledgeable about the past, but make clear that they were relying on us, the youth, for the future.

Two workshops were run each day in order to stimulate discussion on the topics of reconciliation and youth, the arts, education, the stolen generation, native title, health, the Constitution, language and sport. Only students were allowed to make comments in the discussion. Finally, we were getting our say!

Students in the workshops generated many statements of belief about reconciliation and recommendations for action, which were put into the youth charter.

Throughout the workshops, we discovered that students believed that eventually things came down to education - whether this is through schools, communities, advertising or the media - and they thought Australia's resources in these areas were not being used to their full capacity. As a consequence, the reconciliation process is being slowed.

The Wukandi ceremony led by the Reverend Dr Djinyini Gondarra and the East Arnhem people was another significant event during the forum. The Wukandi ceremony is designed to bring two clans together to put aside their differences.

The ceremony was important as this was the first time many of the delegates experienced living Aboriginal culture. It was a privilege for us all that the ceremony was even allowed to be performed on the Kormilda College premises.

Reconciliation won't happen overnight, but we can speed up the process by discussion and communication, and then, perhaps, we'll all understand what reconciliation really means.

The convention closed with the presentation of the youth reconciliation charter to the rest of the forum at the Darwin Entertainment Centre. We will present our charter to federal parliament later this week.

The delegates have pledged to go back to their schools and communities to educate people about the many ways young Australians can bring about reconciliation.

Note: The Youth Charter was presented to the Governor-General and the Federal Government by students from each state and territory on 31 July 1998.

(reprinted from The Australian, 27 July 1998)
STUDENT EMPOWERMENT

Another Triumph for Public Education

The last council meeting of the NSW Parents' and Citizens' Federation, adopted a motion supporting independent Student Representative Councils (SRCs). The State Government also recently launched its new guidelines for SRCs. Here, Rodney Molesworth, Federation’s Publicity Officer, comments on the guidelines and the health of SRCs in public schools:

NSW public schools give students opportunities for participation and representation unparalleled in the world. It has long been recognised by students, parents, teachers and the Department that it is how schools are run, as much as what is taught in them, that determines student outcomes.

The Minister and the Department are to be particularly congratulated on their commitment to representation and on their support and funding of Student Representative Councils (SRCs) on a local, district and state level.

For instance, the Student Welfare Policy states that students should be involved in whole school decision-making, participate in all aspects of school life as equals, and participate actively in the teaching and learning process. How much better off our students are in this kind of active learning environment than under the restrictive, authoritarian structures that operate in other systems!

The Department has recently released A Practical Guide for Student Leaders and Teachers, an excellent resource prepared with the assistance of students. Parents are urged to seek out their school’s copy and get up to date with SRCs!

Parents are also aware of the importance of student participation and representation, and Federation has a brand new policy on the subject. It stresses the value of leadership in its widest sense, the importance of active participation to the learning of citizenship and other skills and values, and the necessity for student voice to be both independent and clearly heard. It also urges closer links and cooperation between SRCs and parent organisations. The Action Item that flowed from the policy is reproduced below. The policy itself will be sent out to all Associations in the next mailout, with a request that the P&C ask to discuss it with the SRC in their school and seek their comments. The opportunity to open closer relations between the two bodies could be taken up at this time.

Despite the general air of enthusiasm and satisfaction in this area of public education, there are some ominous rumblings. Many past and present state level student representatives have felt that the amount of bureaucratic control over their deliberations is out of proportion, that opportunities to be represented on other bodies have been unnecessarily denied, and that too little attention and publicity has attended their recommendations. Federation has already taken steps in line with the Action Item to work with the Department and other organisations to see that the excellent work so far is capitalised upon to the full.

Student participation is yet another feather in the cap of our outstanding and effective system.

Federation’s Action Item or Student Representative Councils:

I ensuring the independence of Student Representative Councils;
II ensuring the greatest possible representation of students on committees and other bodies;
III ensuring there is system-wide encouragement and support for student participation and representation and regular opportunities for the effective public expression of the student voice;
IV ensuring that there is full reporting at a state, district and local level of the scope and effectiveness of student participation representation including the provision of a section in annual school reports;
V encouraging the free flow of information and support between parent and student bodies;
VI negotiating with the New South Wales Teachers’ Federation to seek support for our policy and cooperation in actions to enhance the status and support of Student Representative Council teacher advisers; AND
VII communicating, where appropriate, the support of P&C Federation for decisions of Student Representative Council State Conference and State Council in discussions with the Minister and the Department.

PASTA NEWSLETTER
# 9 - December 1998

PASTA is the acronym of the Professional Association of Student Representative Council Teacher/Advisors. Founded in New South Wales, Australia, in February 1995, our Association exists to support in whatever ways possible those who work with and support programs of student participation, representation and leadership.

SEE OUR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORM IN THIS ISSUE

PASS THE PASTA

On Saturday 7th November, 1998 PASTA held its second AGM at the Central Coast Campus of the University of Newcastle and elected its new committee for 1999. As I commence my second year as your President, I congratulate all new members to our committee and thank most sincerely both those who have continued on and those who have retired from last year’s committee. The PASTA Committee for 1999 is:

- President - Ralph Murray (Central Coast Campus)
- VP National/International Affairs - Charles Kingston (Retired Bathurst High)
- VP Secondary - Jeanne Bow (Kogarah High)
- VP Primary - Peter King (Ungarie Central)
- VP Country - Gae Regan (Richmond)
- VP Independent Schools - Michael Selway (Sydney Boy’s High)
- Secretary - Bob Kijurina (Robert Townsend High)
- Assistant Secretary - Greg Arrow (ex-student member Bathurst High 1998)
- Treasurer - Ken Page (Gorokan High)
- Ordinary Member - Roger Anderson (Community and Business Adviser)
- Ordinary Member - Sue Page (Narara Valley High)
- Ordinary Member - Joriel Jiminez (ex-student member Merry Lands High 1997)

The injection of ex-student members onto our committee is a strong message to all student SRC members across our nation that PASTA welcomes their active membership and participation and is proud both of them and what they have achieved for the students that they represent in our schools. This partnership with youth is what clearly distinguishes PASTA from other Professional Associations, in that SRC Advisers in schools have long appreciated the essential role and contribution made by their enthusiastic and dedicated student SRC members and have long looked on them as both friends and colleagues. The funding constraints that daily plague us have forced SRC Advisers to turn to our ablest young student leaders and ask them to take on a role we would normally expect of a fellow colleague. Few of us have been disappointed with the results and often we stand in awe of what many of our student SRC members have achieved; many, in fact, run where we were only prepared to walk.

PASTA has committed its future growth and development to that of our nation’s youth. We call on all SRC Advisers to encourage the students that they advise to also join PASTA, receive our regular Connect Newsletter, and to participate in the many and exciting projects that are currently helping to shape both our future and that of the student movement within each state of Australia.

Ralph Murray
Are you going to give your SRC members some training so that they can better handle the role for which they have been elected? Then the following tips from the US-based Department of Student Activities NLC Leadership Curriculum Guide may be of some assistance: at all levels, from individual school workshops to international conferences.

**SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN PLANNING A WORKSHOP**

1. **What is our purpose in conducting this workshop?**

   Determining what you want to accomplish with the workshop is a critical step, for it will influence the rest of the planning. Will the workshop be for all members of a group? Will it be for officers of all groups? Are there specific skills you want to teach, or will you focus on an overview of leadership? Some purposes for conducting workshops include:
   - Develop unity
   - Train in leadership/representation skills
   - Motivate and inspire
   - Set goals for group
   - Develop calendar/projects
   - Work in committees
   - Bring leaders of different school groups together
   - Provide groups with new ideas
   - Develop better communications between school leaders and groups
   - Teach different groups how to cooperate with each other
   - Develop staff cooperation
   - In-service staff members

2. **What group of students will we be training?**

   To a certain extent, what you plan will be based on who will participate in the workshop. Consider these possibilities:
   - All your organisation’s officers/chairpeople/representatives
   - All elected/appointed student leaders in the school
   - Club officers and other kind of school activities, such as band, school publication groups, etc.

3. **Who will do the training?**

   Much of the success of the workshop depends on the quality of instruction given, so careful thought must be given as to who will do the training. Consider the following:
   - Do you have knowledgeable student leaders who could train others?
   - Will you/SRC adviser provide the training?
   - Are there other faculty members who could provide workshops?
   - Are there members of the community (politicians, ministers, business leaders) who can serve as resources?
   - Will you need to hire a professional consultant to facilitate the day?
   - What other resources are available in your District/Paired District/State SRCs?

4. **What format will best meet our needs?**

   After determining the objectives of the workshop, consider the various structures that will best accomplish your goals. Some common types of workshops include:
   - half day
   - one day
   - after school
   - two day (overnight)
   - weekend
   - week long

5. **Where will we hold the workshop?**

   Many factors should be considered before choosing a place for the workshop. Consider these details:
   - number of students to participate
   - proximity to the involved school or schools
   - cost
   - size of available rooms and number needed for the group size
   - ability of the host to furnish items needed such as blackboards, projectors, screens, etc.
   - available sites for the time you want
   - large room or area for general assembly

   The decision of where to host the workshop will be based on available facilities, community resources, and budget considerations. Consider:
   - school
   - community building
   - clubhouse
   - camp
   - retreat centre
   - church facility
   - State/National park site

*continued page 17*
A VISION SPLENDID:
TO BUILD A BETTER TODAY FOR THE YOUTH OF TOMORROW

Now is the time for action! Now is the time for change! Out of the shadow of a new millennium come countless thousands of young people looking for a positive direction, seeking their own voice and a shared and valued place in their community. Not to be controlled, suppressed and marginalised, but to be given guidance and empowerment to play an active role in helping to shape their future and that of their world. A dream for some; for others it's always been a continual challenge and a lot of hard work.

Creating SRC Structures Within All Schools

How to best help structure this change process has been the focus of my 25 years of teaching and research. In my first year of teaching (1973 at Henry Kendall High School on the Central Coast of NSW) I established my first SRC and started a 25 year partnership of mutual respect and collaboration with our young SRC student leaders. In Australia today, different from 25 years ago, we have a structure called an SRC permanently entrenched in the culture of our schools and thousands of SRC Advisers helping in their own ways to further strengthen the SRC structure and to make it increasingly more relevant and productive.

NSW has led in promoting SRCs in state secondary schools via an annual NSW State SRC Conference (since 1987 and preceded by a few very well-developed regional networks) and the formation of a NSW State SRC Council (since 1991). Victoria has led in promoting student/SRC membership on School Councils and the promotion of SRCs into primary school. Other states of Australia have also taken on the challenge to introduce SRCs into their schools to such an extent that today SRCs exist in 80% of Secondary Schools and 60% of Primary Schools. The challenge now lies in developing SRCs in all state schools and to encourage our private and independent schools to increase the trend towards introducing SRCs into their schools.

Creating State SRC Structures in Each State

PASTA, in its brief public life (initiated in 1995), has accepted the challenge to champion the student representative movement within Australia and, in so doing, offer real support to its teacher/adviser, student and institutional members, while at the same time assisting in raising the profile of SRCs as a vital area of school curriculum which needs to be fully recognised as such to be most effective within individual schools.

At the National Student Participation Conference (NASPAC IV) held at Sydney University in July 1997, PASTA launched several high profile projects with which to focus growing attention and interest on what SRCs can achieve both within schools and in their wider communities.

- The SRC USA Tour (Ken Page; Tour Co-ordinator)
- The National SRC Youth Parliament/National Student Council (Ralph Murray; National SRC Chair)
- The First SRC 2000 International SRC Conference (Charles Kingston Adviser/Coordinator)
- The Victorian State SRC Project (Ross Appleby; Victorian State SRC; Co-ordinator 1998)
- The Tasmanian State SRC Project (NASPAC V 1999; Co-ordinator Kim Roberts)

Creating National Structures

As a focus for hastening the need to establish school as well as State SRC structures across all of the states of Australia, the National SRC Youth Parliament/National Student Council initiative has been launched. A first National SRC Steering Committee Conference is to be held in April 2000 in Canberra, with the first National SRC Youth Parliament/Student Council to meet for the first time in the old Parliament House in Canberra on the anniversary of Federation in 2001. Interested parties can contact me (02 4348 4342) to assist with this initiative.

Creating International Structures

By initiating an international SRC structure, all nations of the world in time will be asked to support the promotion of SRC structures within their schools and help to raise the importance of youth issues and concerns on the world stage. As a “representative” conference, for SRC 2000 in Sydney, all delegates will need to be elected to represent a constituency and be required to...
articulate their voice and to carry back to those that they represent in their country, the recommendations made there. All such recommendations will then be presented to the United Nations by delegates elected at the International SRC Conference.

Holding this gathering between the Olympics and the Paralympics every four years affords the opportunity to focus the world not only on the sporting achievements of our Olympic athletes but also on those who serve. This must and will include the Olympic volunteers, the young SRC national and state representatives from all over the world and the adult advisers who consistently maintain the continuity of structure and the motivation for these activities to continue within our school systems. All of these will have come together in a unique and unparalleled ‘Olympiad of Citizenship’.

The Olympiad also provides a useful time line of four years for the recommendations passed by the International SRC Conference to be acted on by each delegate, by their respective countries and by the United Nations. At each subsequent International Conference (eg Athens in 2004), progress can be measured and new action initiated.

The tokenism often related to Youth Leadership and Youth Participation is challenged by the emphasis this Conference has on “representation”. In the act of representation there is a moral imperative. If elected, representatives are obligated to articulate the collective opinion of others and to express the majority view in deference to personal beliefs and opinions. Rarely even amongst the politicians of our enlightened time has a truly representative voice been given by those that are called on to represent. Thus the International Student Representative Council (SRC) Conference is an opportunity to practise and to encourage the development of the moral imperatives implied in assuming the role of an elected representative.

To support this new international level of SRC involvement, it will be necessary to create a permanent International Steering Committee with both adult and student members to oversee the development of each new conference’s program and to liaise with the host nations and their respective SRC/Student Leadership movement. Activists are therefore called on to join us in initiating this challenging international SRC level of experience and to assist our colleagues from other countries.

Our NASC/NASSP colleagues in the USA have already joined us in promoting the first International SRC Conference and individually demonstrated their commitment to the concept. The door is open to assist us in the development of the itinerary, the program, the essentials and the extras that will make this Conference special.

Co-hosted by PASTA, the University of Sydney in the Central Coast Campus of the University of Newcastle this 1st SRC International Conference is a wonderful opportunity for corporations, small business, the media, schools, government departments, SRCs and individual to show their very real support in tangible ways, to th present and the future of positive citizenship in this country and in the world.


Ralph Murray

PRINCIPALS
AND PRINCIPLES
REVISITED:

“OZ YOUTH INVITES THE WORLD”

More than 3 years ago, at the 2nd International Principals’ Conference at Darling Harbour, Sydney, then Year 12 student David Jones (Narrabeen High) gave the clarion call to some 1500 principals and educational administrators from around the world to come to Sydney in October 2000.

His speech was one of nine separate speeches given by NSW student representatives at that prestigious Conference. David shared the podium that day with his NSW SRC colleague Sarah Vardon (Bateman’s Bay), then Year 6 student Brooke Frary (now at Pendle Hill High) and then and still Director-General of the NSW Department of Education Mr Ken Boston.

Those speeches, along with photographs and publicity of all 18 students who ‘met the folks’ and promoted student representation as a vital aspect of ‘Partnerships in the Learning Environment’ are in the booklet OZ Youth Speaks To The World, jointly published by PASTA and the University of Newcastle, Central Coast. It is available from us for A$10.00 (US$10 for overseas orders.)

David’s speech of course was not simply an attempt to entice the principals to come and see the Olympics and Paralympics. It was to . . . Well, let David tell you in his own words at the time:

“... The 2000 Olympics offers our SRC movement a special focus to work towards greater world understanding and strengthening of the bonds of friendship for all members of our schools and their culturally diverse communities. In the year 2000 there will
be the first International SRC Conference held in Sydney to coincide with the Olympic Games. It is hoped that student representatives from your schools will take up this invitation to join us here in Australia for this special occasion and our first International SRC Conference. We here in Australia have lived the Olympic dream of peaceful racial co-existence and our schools today are the training ground where all students can learn to live and prosper peacefully together.

"In closing, the SRC movement takes great pride in what we have already achieved in our schools and we are ready to take on as partners in learning with you the challenges of working towards creating still 'safer and happier schools' so that all students can be treated equally and have the opportunity to develop into effective and active citizens in both their schools and their local communities."

FOOTNOTE: David is still a part of "the movement", having recently volunteered to be involved in organising an electorate based committee in the northern Sydney Federal seat of Macquarie.

Greetings!

Salutations, all prospective 2000 Conference delegates! My name is Anna Samson and I am 17 years old.

I am very excited to be co-chair of a conference which recognises the invaluable role played by Student Representative Councils (SRCs) and their counterparts around the world in working to build a happier and safer environment for their constituents and, by extension, the wider community. I believe it appropriate that young people throughout the world are coming together to confront issues that concern them as we herald the new millennium. (Apologies for the gratuitous millennium reference!)

I hope that this conference will wholeheartedly embrace the concept inherent in its theme Building a Better Today, that is, that young people are leaders and representatives of the present, not just the seemingly distant future. As part of an increasingly intelligent, diverse, articulate and aware sector of the 'global village', I hope that delegates will feel empowered to formulate and enact potent initiatives which move above and beyond the often platitudinous efforts of bureaucracies. As co-chair, I am determined that this conference will be more than just a one-off 'chin wag' and will be characterised by its focus on action. Ultimately, the success of the event will be gauged by its establishment as a regular occurrence. I am looking forward to meeting all of you in 2000 for a week of cultural exchange, work (yes, there will be work involved) and FUN!

Anna Samson
Co-Chairperson
1st International SRC Conference 2000

Michael Skott Reviews 'SRCs' in Denmark

In the next edition of this SRC 2000 Bulletin, as part of our 'occasional series' on SRCs AROUND THE WORLD, Danish born and raised Michael Skott looks back at how he experienced student representation and decision-making in his native Denmark and the useful model he adopted as School Captain at Cherrybrook High School. Like David Jones, Michael was also a speaker at the 1995 International Principal's Conference, his forum being an International Panel on Student Leadership with five other student reps attended by over 100 principals. We will also look at student council structures in Canada. Information and/or whole articles on this subject about any part of the world are eagerly sought for future columns. Please send whatever you have to the SRC 2000 Coordinating Committee (see address in this insert) or directly to Connect.
THE SRC INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIAD NEEDS YOU

The 1st INTERNATIONAL SRC CONFERENCE (in SYDNEY AUSTRALIA: 3 - 7/8 OCTOBER 2000) will be the outstanding success it should be with YOUR help. All sorts of people - of all ages - with all sorts of skills and interests are needed to make it happen.

The 'Steering Committee' is no longer. Now there are many different groups working on many different aspects of putting this together. THEY NEED YOU.

The contacts, research and information to tell us all what is happening in student representation 'Around the World' is only just beginning. THIS TASK NEEDS YOU.

The finer details of the program, the people to speak and lead activities, the topics for workshops & debates & the ideas for displays & technology are being discussed. WE WANT BOTH IDEAS AND DOER PEOPLE.

Photocopy these pages and distribute them amongst your friends and colleagues. Consider how you best can contribute beforehand as well as at the Conference. Tick one or more of the following areas. Then send it ASAP to:

SRC 2000 INTERNATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
1 GLADSTONE STREET
BATHURST NSW
AUSTRALIA 2795
Phone: (02) 63322603
Fax: (02) 63322302
E-mail: ckingston@interact.net.au

I WANT TO BE THERE AS:
- a student representative of my group
- an adult representative of my group
- (my group is:______________________)
- a sponsor
- a presenter
- an entertainer
- an SRC 2000 Committee member
- an adviser to the Conference

I WANT TO HELP ORGANISE:
- Publicity
- Communications
- Fund-Raising
- Accounting
- Catering
- Accommodation
- Transport
- Travel Opportunities
- Venues
- International Rooms
- Security Matters
- Health Matters
- Programming
- Entertainment
- Exchange Students
- Registration
- Technology
- Adviser's Functions
- Decorations
- Other
(Please Specify)

OUR GROUP CAN HELP RAISE SOME MONEY BY:
- Talking to businesses
- Working with other schools
- Speaking to service clubs
- Seeking government grants
- Organising a raffle
- Organising other activities
- Doing some paid work
- Other (What sort?)

I / WE WANT TO HELP PRESENT SOMETHING ON:
- Day 1: The Global Context
- Day 2: Cultural Heritage
- Day 3: Youth Social Issues
- Day 4: Environment
- Day 5: Media & Political Process
- Day 5/6: Getting Things Done
- 2001: National Student Parliament
- OTHER (What issues or actions?)

I'LL DO RESEARCH ON:
- Representation in general
- Federation & the Constitution
- Activities in other countries
(Which country/area:______________________)
- Activities in my state
- One of the Conference themes
(Which one:______________________)
- OTHER (______________________)

WE REALLY WANT TO BE IN PRINT:
- Translating material
- Writing an article
- Making some posters
- Creating some graphics
- Producing some photos
- Designing programs
- Drawing some maps
- OTHER (______________________)

I / WE WOULD LIKE TO INVITE OTHERS FROM:
- other countries
(Which?______________________)
- other states (who?)
- other schools
- community groups
- professional organisations
- media

MY/OUR CONTACT DETAILS ARE:

Name(s):____________________________________ Mailing Address:________________________________________

Position:____________________________________ Phone:______________________________________________

School/Organisation:_________________________ Fax:__________________________________________________

Representative Group:________________________ E-mail:_______________________________________________

Connect 114: PASTA Newsletter - Supplement
6. **When will we have the workshop?**

This decision is also affected by the purpose you have in mind. If the type of workshop chosen is going to be held monthly, quarterly, or annually, then a similar date for each workshop is recommended. Consider these choices:

- before school begins
- during the early months of school
- during the winter to re-motivate or train further
- early autumn or late spring (especially if any outdoor activities are planned)
- a school day vs. a weekend or holidays

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### GETTING READY FOR THE WORKSHOP

#### A Conference Checklist

Once the decisions have been made in the planning stage you must execute your plan. The checklist on the right can help in preparing for the workshop.

*Hopefully, this will be the first of a series of articles that will help you improve the way in which you organise your leadership activities. If you have any particular suggestions as to items you may want to see in future such articles, contact PASTA by fax: (02) 4393 1157 or email at suepage@ozemail.com.au*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2nd OZ - USA SRC Tour</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Following from the success of the first USA SRC Tour, future tours will be organised to attend the NASC Conferences on an annual basis. The Conference will be held in the following locations over the next three years:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999 - Minneapolis, Minnesota;</td>
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<td>2000 - San Francisco, California;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001 - North Carolina.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If you or your students are keen to participate in the 1999 USA leadership tour, applications are still being assessed - so far 22 students have been accepted. Once the quota is reached, a waiting list will apply for late approvals. If you are currently in Year 9 to Year 12 and are interested in this or later tours, contact the tour organiser (Ken Page) on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 02 4396 6485; Fax: 02 4393 1157 or E-mail: <a href="mailto:suepage@ozemail.com.au">suepage@ozemail.com.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<th>2nd OZ - USA SRC Tour</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adapted from NASC Leadership Curriculum Guide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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| Form the committee/select the chairperson. |
| Define objectives, theme, real goals. |
| Decide who ought to be involved - delegates/participants/staff/other people needed |
| Set the date |
| Develop the schedule. |
| Determine the length, especially beginning/ending times |
| Decide on discussion/seminar topics |
| Plan activities to achieve goals |
| Determine recreation, entertainment desired. |
| Plan meals, snacks. |
| Set specific times for workshops/presentations and make arrangements accordingly |
| Secure leaders, speakers, staff, resources, equipment. |
| Develop a budget and set the fees. |
| Prepare materials, publicity information, pre-registration letters, applications, material for seminars, maps, charts, theme materials, nametags, place cards, meal tickets, etc. |
| Have a printed program for participants |
| Handouts for participants with all necessary information |
| Send letters of invitation/registration to participants with permission forms. |
| Arrange for printing of any necessary materials |
| Set deadlines. |
| Decide on what equipment and supplies are needed: projectors, screens, cords, carts, duplicating machine, paper, microphone, typewriters, computers, tables, notebooks, folders, printed materials, shirts, jackets, etc. |
| Decide on rules, procedures, policies. |
| Arrange transportation. |
| Organise registration, orientation. |
| Organise departure/process. |
| Clean up. |
| Evaluation of program. |
| Send thank-you letters. |
| File every piece of paper/information/ideas/plan. |
What does membership of PASTA offer you?

- Positive support for SRC teacher advisers
- Practical workshop ideas for use in schools
- Regular seminars, workshops and conferences at an Association, State and National level at reduced registration rates
- Regular newsletters and journals
- Training and development within the SRC area
- A support network for SRC advisers
- Access to SRC networks
- Special resources for students and teachers
- Opportunities to be involved in discussions on the future of SRCs at all levels
- Attendance at open meetings of PASTA which are held at the Joint Council Buildings, Corner Marion and Norton Streets, Leichhardt.

Phone: (02) 9564 3322; Fax: (02) 9564 2342

Mail subscriptions to:

PASTA Inc.,
C/o Joint Council of NSW PTAs
PO Box 577
LEICHHARDT
NSW 2040

I wish to apply to join/renew my membership for the year ending 30th June, 199__

Title _____________________________ Given Names _____________________________

Family or Institutional Name ____________________________________________

Home/Postal Address __________________________________________________

School/Business Address _______________________________________________

Phone Number

Home __________________________________ Work ____________________________

Fax __________________________________ E-mail ____________________________

Employing Authority

☐ NSW Department of School Education
☐ Other (please specify) ________________________________________________

Area of Particular Interest

☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary

Membership (includes subscription to Connect magazine)

☐ Ordinary $50 ☐ Student $25 ☐ Overseas $50
☐ Institutions $80 ☐ Concessional $25 ☐ Corporations $100

☐ I enclose a cheque for $______ made payable to PASTA Inc.
☐ OR

☐ Please debit my credit card for the amount of $______

Credit Card ☐ Bankcard ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

______ __________ ______ ____________

Please check your credit card number before sending this form

Signature _____________________________ Expiry Date ____________
Training Junior School Council Members: Part 2

Training Day Activities: Talking to Tell

In the last issue of Connect, we started a reprint of information originally developed in 1989-1990 (and published in Connect 61) about training day activities for networks of Junior School Council members. Part 1 concentrated on the nature and value of game-style activities. Part 2 provides further information, this time on the more ‘structured’ activities.

High amongst the priorities for these training days was the sharing of information between students from the various schools, with the intent that:

- ideas would travel from school to school - effectively learning from each other;
- students would be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences by telling others about them.

Thus an underlying principle of the discussion sessions was that the discussions should be useful and should be seen to be useful by students - that is that the activities have more than just a ‘temporary’ value. It is important that discussion groups keep notes of the points raised and appoint someone to report back to the whole group. Similarly, information raised in the ‘report-back’ sessions was also recorded (usually, but not always, a consultant did this). In some cases, the discussion was directed towards a specific outcome eg “list three important problems you have faced” that would then form the basis for a future workshop. An emphasis was also placed on outcomes of these discussions that could be taken back to schools to encourage discussion with and participation of other students.

Some devices developed to facilitate such directed discussion were:

Report to the Whole Group

Each small group was provided with a topic to define discussion and asked to take notes and report back on this topic. This could be a common topic between all groups, or could differ from group to group. It was useful to produce discussion questions and to print these in the student booklet, with spaces for written responses. Even when someone was appointed recorder (e.g. on butchers’ paper), it was useful to ask all students to record some points individually.

Here are some notes for workshops and discussion groups on some of the training days:

Group 1:
How does your JSC work? e.g. do you have a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer? Do you run the meetings or does the teacher? Are meetings at lunchtime or during class time? Are all grade levels represented? Are there equal numbers of boys and girls?
Do you report to School Council?

Group 2:
How did your JSC get started? How were your elections held?

Group 3:
List some good things about having a JSC. Can you list any problems relating to a JSC?

Group 4:
What kinds of issues can JSCs tackle?

New ideas for your JSC:
- Make a list of important projects you might tackle.
- Which ones will you tackle first?
- Do you need any money? Where will it come from?
- If you don’t have a JSC, how can you get one started?

Later, when the Preston/Reservoir network was writing the book Democracy Starts Here, this structured sharing became an important part of the writing process, and the book, in turn, provided an ‘external’ reason for the sharing.

Write a Report

In this activity, carried out towards the end of one school year, two schools were paired up. This could be a primary-primary or a primary-secondary pairing. There were two to four students from each school in a group. The students from each school in the group were given the task of writing a ‘report’ on the other school. Towards this, they had to find out information about what the JSC/SRC had achieved throughout the year, and about the operation of the JSC/SRC. The two schools then split apart to write recommendations for the other school for the next year. A ‘report form’ was provided:

**Achievements:**
(What has the SRC/JSC achieved this year?)

(What did the SRC/JSC try to do and NOT achieve? Why?)

**Operation:**
(How well has the SRC/JSC operated this year? eg How well have meetings gone etc?)

**Strengths:**

**Things to be improved:**

**Our Recommendations for Next Year:**

---

December 1998
The schools were also asked to indicate on a target:

**HOW CENTRAL IS YOUR SRC/JSC?**

"How close do you think your SRC/JSC is to the centre of the action at your school?"

The reports and recommendations were then presented to the other school as part of the report-back session.

**Present a Role Play**

This activity was used to focus sharing of information and ideas about how to solve problems faced by (or that could be faced by) JSCs. The groups were again inter-school teams of around six students. They were given the following cards outlining situations and asked to discuss what should happen. They were told they had 15 minutes to:

- work out their responses to the situation;
- plan a 3-minute role play showing what happened;
- work out roles and practice.

**Scene 1:**

**Junior School Council Meeting**

**Issue:**

Peter, one of the senior school representatives, suggests that the JSC organise a fund-raising disco for the senior students only.

Belinda, a grade 2 representative, asks: "Why can't it be for the whole school?"

Peter says: "Shut up! We don't want the little kids hanging around."

**Instructions:**

Older students in the group play the younger students in the role-play. The younger students play the senior students.

How does the group solve the argument?

**Scene 2:**

**Principal's Office**

**Issue:**

Most kids think Maths is boring! The JSC has discussed the maths program they heard about at Times Table Primary School and it sounds like fun.

Mr Al Gebra (the Maths teacher) thinks our request is silly.

**How do we talk to the Principal about changing our Maths program?**

**Scene 3:**

**Junior School Council Meeting**

**Issue:**

Three girls - Tina, Tracey and Tanya - never come to the JSC meetings. Rocco raises this issue saying: "It's not fair..." etc etc.

What should the JSC do to encourage participation and attendance?

**Scene 4:**

**In the School Yard at Lunchtime**

**Issue:**

Janos and his family have just arrived from Greece. As a new student at the school, he wants to know what 'JSC' stands for.

Some kids are telling him it's a waste of time. Tommy the Terror explains that "JSC stands for Jerks, Sucks and Creeps!"

Two JSC representatives are standing nearby. What do they do?

**Scene 5:**

**School Council Meeting**

**Issue:**

Two School Council meetings ago, the adults agreed to the JSC request to provide a sand-pit for the junior school.

So far ... nothing - n information, no sand-pit! School Council meets again tonight.

What should the JS representative(s) say? And how?

**Scene 6:**

**Junior School Council Meeting**

**Issue:**

The prep grade representative says the class wants an elephant to play with in the school yard.

Oh boy!! What'll we do?

How does the meeting continue?

**Scene 7:**

**Junior School Council Meeting**

**Issue:**

The school's computer nerd have struck a problem!

At lunchtime, a small group of boys are busy using the computers. A few girls want a turn, but the computers are all being used. "This happens all the time," they say.

They bring the issue to the JSC meeting.

What does the JSC do about it?

**Scene 8:**

**Home, at the Dinner Table**

**Issue:**

I've just been elected JSC representative for our class! I think it's really important because it gives us kids a say.

I know I'll have to go to meetings and be prepared to do things around the school.

But Dad says student participation is rubbish! "Kids should just concentrate on their class work!"

How do I tell my parents that the JSC is an important part of the school?

*originally in Connect 57, June 1989*
Using $1000

Groups were told that the SRC/SC had been given $1000 by an outside group. They were provided with an authentic looking letter:

**Attention:**

**All members of JSCs/SRCs**

The ... Club of ... has recently completed an audit of all its financial commitments and has discovered an abundance of money in a particular account set aside for youth initiatives.

Consequently, upon discussion at the ... meeting on the 30th October, a recommendation was passed unanimously that all JSCs and SRCs within a 10 kilometre radius of ... be given $1000 each to use in their schools.

The manner in which the money is used must be decided in a democratic way, and students' imagination, creativity and ingenuity should be demonstrated. The ... Club expects a full report from each school which gives an account of the processes and decisions made.

Congratulations on being one of the selected schools and we look forward to receiving your report in the near future.

The groups (in this case, school groups) were asked to consider how they would respond to this offer and hold a mock SRC/JSC meeting to receive and act on this correspondence. They were asked to report back on the process they would use.

---

**Poster Making**

Under the title of ‘Selling Your JSC’, school-based groups were asked to create a useful item to take back to school, while reflecting on the importance and achievements of their JSC. The activity notes in the program booklet said:

**SELLING OUR JUNIOR COUNCIL**

(no, not for money)

We need to tell people about what we do:

- so that they support us;
- so that they help;
- so that they bring their ideas to us;
- so that they know we exist.

Making posters for noticeboards is a good way.

1. Think about what your Junior Council has done.
2. What is the most important idea that you want to tell other students about?
3. What are some simple words that describe your Council or the idea?
4. Use these ideas and words to make a poster. You will take this poster back to school and put it on a board.
5. Make some more posters back at school.

In a variation on this, groups were given a pile of glossy magazines, scissors and paste, and asked to cut headlines and pictures from the magazines that described their JSC, and use these to make a poster.

Next issue: Part 3: Training Days: The Main Themes
Tackling the big issues

It is unlikely that a single student returned home from the recent annual State SRC Conference without some new awareness of the forms that injustice can take. In addition to this enlightenment, they also took away practical ideas they had developed together about how Student Representative Councils (SRCs) can help make schools fairer and more tolerant places.

The annual SRC conference forms an important part of the secondary SRC agenda each year. The 1998 NSW SRC (20 students) and State Conference Working Party (a different 20 students) determined that discrimination would form a major focus of their efforts in 1998. This work culminated in the State SRC Conference held from August 4 to 7.

Each district SRC forum elected three students to represent them at the conference. In addition, 10 Aboriginal students were nominated as participants/observers. Coordination and planning were carried out by Stuart Hearne, Senior Education Officer, Student Leadership and SRC, with assistance from Julie Leslie from Wingham High School and Rod Batkin, from Corrimal High.

The conference is evaluated each year by the Working Party. The student group (met) in September to write an evaluation report which will be provided to all schools and to the Minister.

The first timer

Kevin Duddy was a first timer to the State SRC conference. He is an HSIE teacher from Broken Hill High School who has taken on the role of SRC teacher/adviser at his school and for the Broken Hill District. The Broken Hill contingent travelled for 18 hours by train to get to Vision Valley and they were very grateful to their billets in Dubbo for the break in the journey. These are his impressions:

"I could not help thinking that if these students are indicative of students in our schools, NSW public education does indeed have a bright future."

The conference provided an environment which was stimulating, caring and open. It allowed students to learn to extend and express themselves. The students gained an increased awareness and were inspired to both better themselves and others.

"The focus on A Fair Go For All increased students' awareness that SRCs can be more than a group of students who raise money by selling cakes or running mufﬁ days."

As facilitators of education there are no better opportunities for learning than allowing students to become actively involved in democratic processes. With Civics and Citizenship taking an important role within our schools, SRCs at all levels provide students with wonderful opportunities to actively participate in these practices.

SRC students can be actively involved in student welfare issues.

"In particular, this conference has given the students that accompanied the following:

- A realisation that Western NSW SRC are not isolated and cut off from the remainder of the State. They know that they are connected to other schools and districts through the SRC network. As an SRC Teacher/Adviser I know that too.

- Awareness that their contributions are worthwhile and valued and can result in progress for students Statewide.

- An opportunity and an environment in which they and their fellow students can demonstrate their leadership qualities and skills without embarrassment. I witnessed this growing self-confidence, pride and an sense of purpose in expressing their views and representing their district and schools.

- The chance to listen to and learn from outstanding community leaders and experts.

"The conference activated the Department's commitment to support student participation in decision making in schools. Students need opportunities like this, to learn leadership skills so that they can undertake this role in schools and also in their community."

The careers adviser

This was also the first State conference for Rosemary Barber, Careers Adviser from Lithgow High School, who accompanied a contingent from Bathurst and Orange Districts.

"Students developed increased awareness of the discrimination issues covered by legislation in NSW: race, sex, age, disability, homosexuality, transgender and marital status. The knowledge, frankness and varied methods of presentation were well received by students and staff.

"I was interested to watch the process through which district representatives raised pressing issues with their own districts and schools. In subsequent workshops, students discussed, formulated, voted on and then prioritised recommendations."
These recommendations were then reviewed by a student reference group.

"The final recommendations were dealt with by the full forum of 130 students using formal meeting procedures. Those recommendations that were supported by the forum will be taken back to the NSW SRC district and schools SRCs for discussion and action.

"One proposal which attracted support from the forum was for an anti-discrimination day when primary and secondary students could learn about their rights and responsibilities about discrimination within the school. It was the view of the students that SRC teacher/advisers and discrimination contact officers should be involved in conducting this day."

The voice of experience

Rod Batkin, Leading Teacher at Corrimal High School, has attended many SRC conferences.

"Ten years ago I became very interested in student leadership through my involvement in peer support programs, student welfare and drug education. About that time, I watched some colleagues return on a 'high' from one of the very early State SRC conferences. Their enthusiasm for a Statewide network was infectious.

"In the early 90s, I was appointed to a new high school on the South Coast and one of my tasks was the establish the school's SRC. During this time I also worked closely with student welfare colleagues in establishing and supporting a strong regional SRC network that would provide the link between schools SRCs and the fledgling State SRC organisation.

"In 1993 I attended my first State SRC Conference and came away committed more than ever to the ideals of student leadership, representation and participation. I know that this was something I wanted to get involved in. The rest is history. I'm still involved.

"Through the process of working with students in putting together this annual student event, I am able to get a feel for what is happening at district level. The teacher role with the working party is one of mentor, critical friend and supporter.

"There is incredible satisfaction at the conclusion of the conference to acknowledge the personal growth in the students as they have developed skills in planning, communicating and negotiating. One of the most empowering aspects is to allow students to make mistakes, acknowledge them, regroup and find a solution.

"Being involved allows me to test out and reaffirm some of my beliefs about student representation and participation. Witnessing the personal growth in students is satisfying and my main motivation for involvement."

Student Leadership for Aboriginal Students

Barry Corr, Senior Education Officer, Drug Education has been working with the NSW SRC on issues arising from last year's conference: Drugs Exist: know the risk. He sees the potential of the SRC network to assist in the implementation of the Aboriginal Education Policy. He spoke with the Aboriginal student delegates at this year's conference to collect their ideas on what an Aboriginal student leadership strategy should take into account. These ideas will be used for formal discussion with the Aboriginal Education Unit.

The students said that even when Aboriginal students are aware of the SRC and want to be involved, it is difficult for them to gain membership. This relates to issues such as the lack of confidence and relatively small numbers of Aboriginal students in some schools as well as racist attitudes towards Aborigines. The SRC is likely to attract vocal individuals who are part of the majority culture in the schools.

Students' suggestions for the future include:

- identify support people who can assist Aboriginal students to become part of SRCs;
- conduct SRC awareness-raising sessions for Aboriginal students;
- establish study circles;
- encourage vocal Aboriginal students to volunteer for SRC;
- consider establishing an Aboriginal position on the SRC which is elected by Aboriginal students;
- encourage non-Aboriginal students to become advocates on Aboriginal issues;
- look at the benefits of establishing a junior AECG which could be linked to SRC;
- establish a permanent Aboriginal position on the NSW SRC;
- establish a workshop at State conference to explore the representation of minority groups;
- continue the concept of Aboriginal participant/observers;
- ensure that all SRC State representatives understand Aboriginal student leadership initiatives.

What will happen now?

District SRCs have received funding to conduct district forums with strategies developed at the State conference and school SRCs will conduct activities on discrimination to raise awareness of fairness at school.

from Inform, 26 August 1998

NSW Department of Education and Training
Resource Kit: Student Representative Councils
"a practical guide for student leaders and teachers"

This substantial and valuable kit of ideas, resources, pro-formas, examples and stimulus questions has been produced by the NSW Department of Education and Training to "support schools and student leaders in establishing an effective and successful SRC by providing policy and operational information. Practical strategies and best practice examples are also included."

The guide draws on a long tradition of SRCs in NSW and also builds upon and adapts material from an earlier version of this kit (issued in about 1989).

Here's what you'll find in the Guide's easy to access sections:

- Ideas for using this resource - ideas for student leaders, ideas for teacher advisers;
- Why do schools have an SRC? - policies you should know about; examples of good practice;
- Where does our SRC fit? - within the school community, beyond the school;
- Setting up an effective SRC - strategies for gaining support; a process for developing formal leadership structure;
- What roles are associated with an SRC? - SRC officer, SRC teacher adviser, District teacher adviser, District students welfare consultant;
- How should an SRC work? - elections, membership, constitution, meeting, promotion of the SRC;
- Skills to help an SRC work effectively - communication, negotiation; dealing with difficult people in a group; problem solving and decision making; goal setting and action planning;
- References, further support an information - Departmental document and support; leadership resources; group, resources.

The kit includes action sheet which can be copied for SRC training and brief 'good practice' highlights: sections which summarise positive ideas. The sturdy loose leaf format also encourages the collection and development of local resources which can be stored in the binder.

Though containing materia specific to New South Wales (particularly reference to policies and structures), there is also much in this kit - particularly the material about SRC operations and training - that will be valuable for all SRCs across Australia.

Copies of A Practical Guide for Student Leaders and Teachers have been sent to all NSW secondary schools in 1998, but are also available from:

Stuart Hearne
Senior Education Officer
Student Leadership and SRC
Student Welfare Directorate
NSW Dept of Education & Training
Private Bag 3, Ryde NSW 2112
Phone: (02) 9886 7450
Fax: (02) 9808 9543
Cost is likely to be about $30-$40 per kit.
Constitutional Centenary Foundation

Established in 1991, the Foundation's mission is to encourage Australians to understand and discuss their Constitution and system of government. It is a non-partisan organisation which provides independent and authoritative information about constitutional issues. Board members include prominent Australians from corporate, media, government, legal and academic backgrounds.

Activities of the CCF to inform the wider community include: fact sheets and publications on the constitutional system, centenary of federation programs, schools and local community education programs about the Constitution.

Schools Constitutional Conventions

The National Schools Constitutional Convention is the national event of the Foundation's Schools Constitutional Convention (SCC) program for senior secondary students (years 11 and 12). It is held annually in Canberra in March. The 120 student delegates are selected from regional and state/territory conventions, which involve 3,000 students each year from the independent, catholic and government sectors. All senior secondary schools in Australia are invited to participate in this innovative program.

The objectives of the SCCs are to encourage young Australians to understand how we are governed and thereby enhance their participation in our democracy. The SCCs promote the development of skills through the active discussion and sharing of diverse views on important issues facing the nation.

The 1998 three-day National Convention program included a welcome reception by His Excellency the Honourable Sir William Deane, Governor-General at Government House, question time in the House of Representatives, dinner address by Justice Kenneth Haynes at the High Court, a meeting with the Prime Minister and Federal Members of Parliament at afternoon tea, and two days of comprehensive debate on the issue of Citizenship and the Preamble. The NSCC 98 speakers were His Excellency Dr Bhadra Ranchod, South African High Commissioner, Tan Le - Young Australian of the Year, His Excellency Mr Dominique Girard - Ambassador to France, and David Marr - Journalist and Barrister.

The NSCC received widespread media coverage in both print and electronic media, including major regional and metropolitan radio and television.

Delegates addressed their schools and community groups and promoted media coverage at the community and regional level about their participation and the issues discussed at the Convention.

The Convention's Communiqué was incorporated into Hanaar by the President of the Senate, Senator the Hon Margaret Reid, and forwarded to State/Territory Premiers and Ministers for Education.

Pat delegates have taken part in major national events considering the future of the constitutional system, such as the 1998 Constitutional Convention in Canberra.

For more details, contact the

Constitutional Centenary Foundation
155 Barry Street
Carlton Vic 3053.

Phone: 03 9349 1846
Fax: 03 9349 1779
Freecall: 1800 622 001
Email: ccf2001@ibm.net
Website: http://www.centenary.org.au

Australian Curriculum Studies Association
Biennial Conference
September 29 - October 2, 1999
Perth, WA

Theme: Framing the Future
Issues:
- Technology
- Collaborative learning
- Values and active citizenship
- Assessment

Contact: ACSA, PO Box 331, Deakin West ACT 2600

STUDENT PARTICIPATION E-MAIL DISCUSSION GROUP
To join: Send an e-mail to: <majordomo@edna.edu.au>
saying (in the body of the message): subscribe student-participation

... post topics for discussion ... make announcements ... ask questions ...
share information and resources ...

December 1998
Millennium Young People's Congress
Hawaii, 25-29 October 1999
... young people establishing their priorities for the new millennium ...

This Congress is designed to be the defining youth event in the run up to the Millennium. Supported by the United Nations, it is like a young people's Earth Summit - our chance to tell leaders what priorities they ought to be focusing on as they develop their policies for the new millennium.

We want to involve as many young people around the planet as possible, but obviously we cannot bring thousands of young people to Hawaii for the Congress. This is why we are arranging an extensive national consultation process in every country on earth through schools and the media so that every young person feels they can have a chance to contribute to the debate. Also, following the Congress, we want young people to be able to read its results in the press, and hear the young people's ideas debated in the media following a presentation of the Congress Report to the Head of State.

To do all this, we need active, concerned and efficient National Outreach Coordinators in every country. These people do not have to be big national organisations; they can be concerned school teachers, or a group of active young people. All we require is that in each country, at least 1000 young people are actively involved in the Congressional process. We hope that most national coordinators will be able to reach a lot more: one piece in the press or on television will reach tens of thousands of young people. But the job is really to get at least 1000 written responses to the request for priorities. And that will involve getting some teachers and/or some social action youth groups involved.

Have Your Voice Heard !!!!

As part of an international effort to help build a global voice for youth, young people of all ages (but preferably between the ages of 15 and 24 years) are being asked to answer some questions (below). The information gathered here will be used to build National Youth Platforms in every country around the world. Your voice will be added to others', ensuring a diverse response in creating Youth Platforms. These will then be used to create the first Global Youth Platform which will be presented to World Leaders. Youth Platforms will play an important part in representing the voice of young people in the work of the United Nations Youth Assembly.

First Name: 
Last Name: 
Age: 
Sex: 
Country: 
E-Mail: 
Address: 
Telephone: 
Fax: 

- What are your top 3 issues/concerns for your country?
- What do you believe are the solutions for these issues/concerns?

Hard work, we know - and all we can promise that the young people that do become involved will; to see their concerns raised in the debate about nation priorities. Also we can promise that:
- two young people will get free return air tickets Hawaii and have all their expenses covered during their stay there;
- all schools and groups who contribute poor paintings and reports for the Congress Book will receive a copy of the book when it is finished.

And what is in it for the National Outreach Coordinator. Some of you will be invited as facilitator to the Hawaii Congress. If you cannot raise the fun yourself to cover the costs of traveling, holding the nation consultations etc, we plan to have a budget to cover your costs - especially in developing countries. We do not have this funding confirmed as yet, but we do have the flight and publisher confirmed and we have all the land costs covered in Hawaii. We hope to have the funds for it educational outreach by early in the new year.

Return your address to us and we shall send you copy of the Participants Pack and National Outreach Coordinator Guidelines.

Erin Mendelson and Lissa Wheen
MYP Coordinators
Peace Child International
The White House
Buntingford Herts UK SG9 9AH
Ph: (44) 1763 272 4459; Fax: (44) 176 327 4460
E-mail: <RescueMission@compuserve.com>

- What is your most important message for you national leader?
- Would you lend your voice to the “ONE DAY OF PEACE January 1, 2000” campaign, designed to create ONE DAY (24 hours) of world armistice, thereby giving humanity honourable means of settling their personal, national and international differences? 
  YES / NO
- Would you be supportive of the effort to create permanent governmental body of youth (Unit: Nations Youth Assembly) to work with the UN in addressing the issues that concern young people? 
  YES / NO
- May we quote you? 
  YES / NO

Please return to: 
globalyouth@hotmail.com
or
"Global Youth Platforms"
c/o Louisa Kirby, PO Box 221, Rozelle NSW 2039

More information as to how to be involved in the UNITED NATIONS YOUTH ASSEMBLY and the ONE DAY IN PEACE campaign will be released shortly, so keep your eyes on your in-box!
Local and Overseas Publications Received

Connect receives many publications directly or indirectly relevant to youth and student participation. We can't lend or sell these, but if you want to look at or use them, contact us on:

(03) 9489 9052 or (03) 9344 9637

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS:

Australian:


OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

Australian:

Education Alternatives (Caulfield East, Vic) Vol 7 Nos 9, 10 (November, December 1998)

Education Links (UTS, Broadway, NSW) #56/57, Spring 1998

Mind Matters Newsletter (Mind Matters, Youth Research Centre, Vic) July 1998

Principal Matters (Secondary Principals' Associations of Australia, Vic) Vol 10 No 2, October 1998

SRC: Student Representative Councils: A Practical Guide for Student Leaders & Teachers (NSW Department of Education and Training) - kit

Starlink (Melbourne, Vic) Issue 31; September 1998

YACSAround (YACSA, SA) October/November 1998

Overseas:

AERO-Gramme (Roslyn Heights, NY, USA) #25, Fall 1998

USA Today: Access USA - National Student Forum (USA) Vol 1, Fall 1998

Documents

The documents listed in this column are of general background value. A photocopy is available for research purposes. The length and cost (to cover copying and postage) is listed. Please order by code number.

A full, computerised index of these documents is now available from Connect for $3; this can be accessed and printed by topic, key-word etc or simply sequentially.

Code Description/Pages/Cost

451 Forum for the Future: Final Bulletin from the Convention Secretariat - Convention Summary (Kormilda College, NT) 14-17 July 1998 (6 pp; $1.00)

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STUDENT PARTICIPATION SUPPORT MATERIALS AVAILABLE

See the back page of this issue of Connect

Student Action Teams

The Victorian Department of Education, in partnership with the Department of Justice, has funded twenty schools throughout the state to develop Student Action Teams to promote safer communities.

In these teams, students will link with community groups and other professionals to research, plan and implement initiatives in areas such as:

- strategies to promote safe sport and recreation, safe routes to school and person safety;
- strategies to expand cultural understanding and care for vulnerable groups;
- action research to investigate and respond to local safety issues (recreation, public transport, young people's use of public space etc);
- strategies to reduce school bullying;
- strategies to deal with drug and alcohol abuse; and so on.

These Student Action Teams are also asked to look at ways to link with and enhance the role of SRCs in their schools around these issues.

For more details, contact Graeme Guy, Project Manager, School Community Support Branch, Department of Education, GPO Box 4367, Melbourne 3001

December 1998
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Miscellaneous Resources:

- Students and Work - 1985 *Connect* reprint booklet #5 ($5) $...........
- Democratic Decision Making in Schools - Victorian PEP (1987) ($3) $...........
- Democracy Starts Here! Junior School Councils at Work (1996) ($7) $...........

Foxfire Resources:

- Sometimes a Shining Moment (Wigginton) ($25) $...........
- Foxfire 9 (Doubleday Anchor) ($25) $...........
- Foxfire: 25 Years (Doubleday) ($25) $...........
- A Foxfire Christmas (Doubleday hardcover) ($25) $...........
- Shining Moments - *Foxfire* video (1 hour) (loan for 1 week: $5) $...........

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